

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SCI-06 CPR-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01

SS-15 USIA-12 IO-13 NASA-04 RSR-01 /104 W

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R 181009Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY DACCA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0373

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, TSPA, BG, US

SUBJECT: REMARKS OF PRESIDENT CHOWDHURY

REF: STATE 112903

1. AT APOLLO 17 LUNAR SAMPLE PRESENTATION CEREMONY JULY 17, PRESIDENT OF BANGLADESH ASKED CHARGE TO CONVEY HIS PERSONAL GREETINGS TO PRESIDENT NIXON AND HIS BEST WISHES FOR SPEEDY RECOVERY. CHOWDHURY SPOKE ADMIRINGLY OF PRESIDENT'S EFFORTS IN SEARCH OF PEACE AND RECONCILIATION AND EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR WHITE HOUSE VISIT OF SPECIAL ENVOY SIDDIQUI.

2. CONVERSATION TURNED INELUCTABLY TO BDG PROBLEMS WITH PAKISTAN. PRESIDENT CHOWDHURY, WHO WAS COURTLY BUT WARM THROUGHOUT, GAVE THINLY DISGUISED EXPRESSION OF COMMON BENGALIEE BELIEF THAT BHUTTO WOULD NOT BE BEHAVING SO CAPRICIOUSLY IF ONLY HIS POWERFUL FRIENDS (READ US) WOULD INFLUENCE HIM TO BE MORE CONSTANT AND CONCILIATORY. SPECIFIC REFERENCE WAS TO BHUTTO'S RENEGING ON WILLINGNESS TO SIT STILL FOR TRIAL OF AT LEAST SOME WAR CRIMINALS.

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3. CHOWDHURY REMINISCED ABOUT HIS TRIPS TO US DURING
LIBERATION STRUGGLE AND BROUGHT OUT HIS OLD PAKISTANI
PASSPORT SHOWING A US VISA VALID UNTIL MAY 6, 1975.
COMMENT: CHOWDHURY, PERHAPS UNCONSCIOUSLY, HAD CHARGE,
CARLE AND DAVIES MENTALLY SQUIRMING IN THEIR SEATS
SINCE THOUGHT OF BENGALESE PRESENT WERE PALPABLY
TURNING ON UNANSWERED QUESTION OF WHEN PRIMIN MUJIB
WOULD BE INVITED TO VISIT US.

4. CHOWDHURY DID NOT RESIST TEMPTATION TO COMMENT ON
ILLOGIC OF BHUTTO'S FAILURE TO RECOGNIZE BANGLADESH
NOW THAT BENGALIEE FLAG HAS BEEN TO THE MOON AND RETURNED.

5. PALACE STAFF INDICATES THAT LUNAR SAMPLE WILL BE
DISPLAYED TEMPORARILY IN PUBLIC GALLERY OF PRESIDENTIAL
PALACE UNTIL DECISION IS MADE ON PERMANENT DEPOSITORY.

6. BDG AND MEDIA UNSTINTING IN GRATITUDE AND PLEASURE
AT RECEIVING MOON SAMPLE AND PARTICULARLY MOON-TRAVELLED
BANGLADESH FLAG. PROMINENT TV AND RADIO COVERAGE
FOLLOWED BY FRONTPAGE PICTURES IN ALL WEDNESDAY PAPERS,
WITH ACCOMPANYING QUOTES FROM PRESIDENT NIXON'S LETTER
TO PRESIDENT CHOWDHURY AND CHARGE'S REMARKS (LATTER
DRAWN FROM STATE 129076).
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